

## Radio System Interoperability Committee

### Meeting Notes – July 9, 2002

Chuck Beck submitted a report on System Expectations, which is attached to these minutes. The report posed a series of questions for consideration in establishing a communications system. The questions related to what lines of communications are required to properly manage an emergency incident on three different levels: strategic, operational and tactical. The key question is, who needs to talk to whom?

George Pohorilak noted that 700 MHz is coming. Many of the statements in the report are short term only. DOIT has a large pool of 700 MHz frequencies. The service will optimistically be available in 2006. Chuck Beck noted that the changeover to 700 MHz will be expensive, and questioned whether the dollars will be available to convert.

Skip Thomas said that, given the limited resources available, radio interoperability will begin with incident commanders. This is a quick fix, and all we can afford right now. It is not seen as an end result. We need to set a time line, and get going on this. We will be surveying municipalities to determine who the contacts will be for each municipality. Up to three radios will be issued to each municipality. Those who want more can use their LOCIP funds to purchase additional radios. He raised the question of how these radios would be licensed.

Keith Victor, from CRCOG, suggested that radios be centrally stored and passed out as needed. He also suggested that they be placed at the PSAPs. Skip Thomas replied that State Police will have some radios held in reserve to pass out at emergency incident sites, but that every town should have there own so operations can begin immediately. Keith also cited the problems with TIMS (lack of protocols and training) as a concern. Skip said that training will be mandated to avoid the problems that have plagued TIMS. His plan is that the radios would be issued at the training: no training, no radio.

Chuck Beck reported that the Office of Emergency Management has received a grant of \$150,000 from the federal Department of Justice to purchase 800MHz handheld radios. They also expect to purchase 20 mobile repeater trailers. The repeater trailers will be stationed at armories around the state for quick deployment. There was discussion about coordinating the OEM and OPM radio purchases to ensure uniformity, prevent overlapping distribution and to get the best pricing. Skip Thomas said that coordination would be arranged through OPM under secretary Brian Mattiello.

Mark Libby said that the Department of Public Health has \$14 million in federal funds available to upgrade the CMED system. They will put in the ICALL and

ITAC frequencies as part of that process. Also, each hospital will be getting two satellite telephones and radios for the ham bands for emergency use.

Greg Piontek reported that the Department of Environmental Protection has received 15 radios through the State Police for their hazardous materials and radiation units. They need to gear up their dispatch center to handle 800MHz frequencies.

George Carbonell said that the Department of Transportation has two 24-7 dispatch points, and they also want to interface with the ICALL and ITAC frequencies.

George Pohorilak handed out draft version 5 of the proposed protocol for using and testing the ICALL/ITAC system (attached to minutes). If he hears no comments within a week, he will consider the protocol to be final.

Skip Thomas reported that OPM has \$600,000 available to fund this project. OPM will survey municipalities and state agencies to determine who will take custody of the radios when issued. The survey will be sent out by July 30<sup>th</sup>, purchases will be made this Summer, and training and equipment issue will occur in early Fall.

Mark Libby noted that the CMEDs are also PSAPs, so there is some economy there. Chuck Beck said that the CMED and PSAP consoles should be a priority for Byrne funds. Mike Stemmler said that the most important element is tying the dispatch centers together, noting that the system's purpose is coordination, not communications among those actually working at an incident site.

The committee determined that there are 305 fire departments and 91 police departments. It was recommended that civilian heads of municipalities not be given radios in the first round. There are also 108 PSAPs. The estimated cost is \$1,100 per handheld and \$5,000 per console. OEM will take care of state agency needs.

The next meeting was set for August 13, 2002 at 1:00 p.m. at DPS.